

St Edward's School

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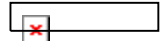
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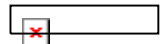
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Introduction and summary

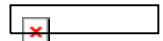


Purpose and scope of the inspection



This inspection was carried out by the Office for Standards in Education under Section 163 of the Education Act 2002 in order to advise the Secretary of State for Education and Skills about the school's suitability for continued registration as an independent school.

Information about the school



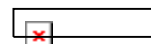
St Edward's School is an independent residential special school which provides education for boys with emotional, social and behavioural needs. The school occupies a former manor house and adjacent buildings and is set in 180 acres of grounds, approximately four miles from Romsey in Hampshire. The school has been open since 1984 and is in the ownership of the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trust.

The school is approved by the Department for Education and Skills for up to 77 pupils. Currently 48 pupils attend, aged between 11 and 16 years. Pupils have a history of disrupted schooling and many experience difficulty with basic numeracy and literacy. All pupils have a statement of special educational needs (SEN). The school offers termly boarding provision, although the majority of pupils visit their home at weekends. Pupils attend from boroughs or counties in the south of England and their places are funded by their local authorities.

The school seeks to encourage the physical, intellectual, spiritual and personal development of pupils. Pupils are expected to take responsibility for their actions and become positive members of

society. The school aims to offer a broad curriculum based on the National Curriculum.

Summary of main findings

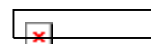


St Edward's is a purposeful school, where pupils are set stimulating challenges and learn to experience success. The school achieves its aim to improve pupils' self-esteem and help them develop the skills to become responsible citizens. Teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good progress in relation to their ability. There is a committed staff team which is successful in building very good relationships with pupils. Pupils behave very well, hold positive views of the school and enjoy attending.

The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, which includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. Assessment is not used consistently in all subjects to review pupils' learning in lessons and to inform teachers' planning. The curriculum is enhanced by provision of a very wide range of well-organised after-school clubs and activities. There is a very high standard of accommodation and the extensive grounds are used well to support learning.

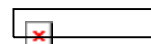
The school provides very well for the needs of pupils currently on roll. In the past year a large number of pupils who exhibit more challenging behaviour have been excluded.

What the school does well



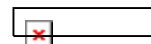
- teaching is good and ensures that pupils make good academic progress;
- pupils have positive attitudes; they work hard and behave very well in lessons and around the school;
- a good curriculum offers the full range of National Curriculum subjects which is enhanced by the school's extensive facilities and provision of an impressive range of after-school clubs and activities;
- very good provision for developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education successfully encourages them to become more self-confident and mature;
- there is a caring ethos and very effective procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, health and safety. Staff forge positive relationships with pupils which engenders mutual trust and respect; and
- the strong links between residential care and education staff ensure a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour and result in a unified 24-hour curriculum.

What the school must do in order to comply with the regulations



- ensure that appropriate checks are carried out to confirm staff qualifications prior to appointment; and
- provide further information for parents as detailed in section 6 of this report.

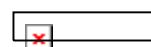
Next steps



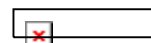
Whilst not required by the regulations, the school might wish to consider the following points for development:

- strategies for reducing the high number of exclusions; and
- the use of regular assessment to review pupils' learning and to inform teachers' planning.

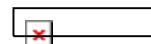
Compliance with the regulations for registration



1. The quality of education provided by the school



The quality of the curriculum



The quality of the curriculum is good. The school offers a very good range of activities and achieves its aim to encourage the physical, intellectual, spiritual and personal development of pupils.

The curriculum is broad and balanced and all National Curriculum subjects and religious education (RE) are taught. There are specialist facilities for teaching science, art, music, information and communication technology (ICT) and the vocational subjects of horticulture and painting and decorating. The school is currently re-equipping its design and technology (DT) room to a high standard, which is being organised by a recently appointed qualified specialist. Physical education (PE) benefits from use of the school's excellent facilities. These include two gymnasias, a swimming pool, multi-gym, tennis courts and sports fields. There is a good personal, social and health education (PSHE) curriculum which has an appropriate emphasis on pupils building positive relationships, making choices and living healthily. The PSHE curriculum is strengthened through pupils' participation in year group meetings and the school council. Citizenship is provided as part of the PSHE curriculum and supported by links with the community. A Connexions adviser attends annual reviews and conducts individual interviews to give advice on future work and training.

The school gives a high priority to developing literacy and several pupils benefit from individual tuition to help improve their basic skills. Aspects of grammar are highlighted and form the focus of lessons across the school. Set texts are taught concurrently in several classes and linked with work in other subjects, an example being when pupils study Shakespeare's Macbeth and make puppets in DT portraying characters from the play.

Pupils in Key Stage 4 follow General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE) courses in English, mathematics, science, ICT, PE, RE, art and DT. They can also choose to study a vocational course in either horticulture or painting and decorating. These courses are very well organised and provide pupils with experience of running a business. In horticulture they make

hanging baskets, cost the materials and keep a financial record on a computer spreadsheet. The study of horticulture benefits from the use of the school's greenhouses, orchard and a vegetable plot.

Pupils in Year 7 are taught in a combined class with some pupils from Year 8. Other pupils are taught in classes which correspond to their age. Groups are small and typically comprise between three and seven pupils. The timetable provides an appropriate balance between subjects and there is sufficient taught time during the week. Weekly 'activity time' is used well to introduce pupils to a wide range of sports and leisure pursuits.

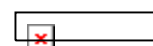
The curriculum is matched closely to the needs of the pupils who currently attend. However, provision is not suitable for pupils with more extreme and challenging behaviour who require intensive individual support. The school has excluded a large number of such pupils in the past year.

Curriculum leadership is good and policy statements and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Planning to ensure sufficient progression in learning as pupils move through the school is not yet complete, particularly in ICT and DT. Several curriculum co-ordinators have been in post a relatively short time but have identified areas for improvement and are developing plans to address them.

Trips and visits are used well to enliven and extend the curriculum. As well as visits to local places of interest the school has organised trips to the Somme battlefield and the French Alps.

Homework is only set occasionally. However, there is an impressive range of after-school clubs and activities which are particularly successful in supporting the PE curriculum. These include a history club, boxing, rifle shooting, snowboarding, weight lifting and judo. The teaching and residential care staff work together closely. Several care staff are involved in running activities during the school day and teachers also organise after school events. This strong teamwork ensures that the school provides a unified 24-hour curriculum which is very effective in supporting pupils' social development.

The quality of the teaching and assessment



The quality of teaching is good. In two thirds of lessons seen it was good or better and in all other lessons it was at least satisfactory. Expectations are high and there is a strong focus on learning. There is a brisk start to lessons and a good variety of activities, which maintains pupils' interest and keeps them on task. Staff have a good relationship with pupils. They use humour to diffuse potentially difficult situations and offer praise and encouragement, which helps pupils give of their best. There is a strong focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills, which fosters their self-confidence and their ability to express themselves and listen to the views of others.

In the best lessons, teachers have very good knowledge of their subject and are able to convey their enthusiasm to pupils. Resources are used effectively to stimulate pupils' interest. Examples occur in history, when pupils hold part of an old cannon to deepen their understanding of life in Nelson's navy, and in English, when they are blindfold and asked to describe a mystery object. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for equipment and develop their independence. This is especially evident in the vocational courses where pupils are able to manage their own workspace and materials.

Although lessons are generally well planned, time allowed at the end for reviewing and consolidating what pupils have learned is often too short. In a very small number of lessons, pupils

are not given sufficient opportunity to explore their own solutions to problems.

There are good resources to support teaching and learning. These include artefacts to support history, geography and RE and a well stocked school library. Literacy is effectively resourced through the use of carefully chosen texts, spelling programmes and ICT software. There is limited use of ICT to support teaching in subjects across the curriculum, although during the inspection good examples of its use were seen in DT and horticulture.

Staff have a consistent approach to managing pupils' behaviour informed by a specific approach which emphasises that pupils can make choices and should take responsibility for their behaviour. Classroom rules are clear and good behaviour and effort are rewarded through a points system. Teaching assistants are often adept at prompting and supporting pupils and encouraging them to persevere.

All staff at the school demonstrate appropriate knowledge of the subjects they teach. They also have a good knowledge and understanding of teaching pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. Good induction and training is provided and there is a strong informal network of support for colleagues. Several staff have additional specialist qualifications including weight training, judo, outdoor pursuits, water sports and rifle shooting. This ensures that these activities are organised effectively and taught to a high standard.

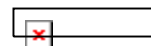
Baseline assessment is used to good effect when pupils start the school to establish their reading age and National Curriculum level. Tests are also used to identify pupils' specific learning difficulties which may require individual support. At the end of each academic year assessment against National Curriculum levels is used to summarise individual pupils' progress and to complete their annual reports. The use of on-going assessment to inform lesson planning is insufficient in most subjects. The school has identified the use of assessment as a priority for development.

Pupils make good progress in developing their social and academic skills. The structured approach to teaching literacy is having a marked impact on improving pupils' reading and writing. Most pupils leave having gained the Vocational Access Certificate and GCSE examination passes in several subjects. Several also gain the Junior Sports Leadership Award and Royal Yachting Association Power Boat Level 1. Pupils are prepared well for leaving school and many are successful in securing placements on further training courses.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

2. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils



The school is very strongly committed to promoting all aspects of pupils' personal development. Based upon Catholic Christian values, it provides pupils with the personal skills and knowledge which help them to become increasingly mature and responsible young adults.

There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The school day begins in the chapel with a 'thought for the day', which includes scripture readings and prayers. Pupils' responses to this are exemplary. RE and other subjects also provide opportunities for pupils to deepen their spiritual understanding, as in science lessons, when pupils are encouraged to wonder about the vastness of the solar system. Pupils' self-esteem is enhanced by participation in the wide range of sporting and outdoor pursuit activities, for example snow-boarding, rifle shooting and sailing. Pupils speak highly of their experiences and convey a real sense of achievement.

Provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. There is a positive ethos in the school. Staff set a good example, and make it clear to pupils which behaviour is acceptable. Pupils are consistently encouraged to consider others and recognise each other's achievements, for example in weekly assemblies. As pupils progress through the school, they learn to make positive judgements based on a developing sense of morality. Adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and manage this successfully through consistent strategies. Younger pupils and those who have been at the school for only a short time are supported in improving their behaviour through individual programmes. By the time pupils have reached the upper years they demonstrate the moral values which underpin their behaviour programmes.

Pupils' social development is promoted very well by the school. Year group meetings and the school council provide a forum for pupils to discuss issues such as bullying and raising funds for the Tsunami appeal. Pupils learn to express their views and listen to the opinions of others. Pupils are often encouraged to help each other, both in lessons and in recreational activities. The extra-curricular activities are effective in developing teamwork. Staff manage them well and pupils achieve high levels of performance. This aspect of the school's work is recognised by the majority of parents who feel the school offers a very good range of activities for pupils to develop their social skills.

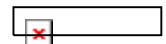
The PSHE and citizenship curriculum encourages pupils to become active citizens. Pupils take responsibility for parts of the school grounds. They have planted bulbs, pruned shrubs and have assisted in the restoration of a recently discovered water feature. During 'Rainbow Days' they also work with pupils from local special schools, helping them make badges and cards.

The school encourages pupils' cultural development very effectively. This occurs routinely in subjects such as art, English, RE and history. In history, for example, pupils have set up a professionally acclaimed museum of First World War artefacts which they have discovered during the course of several visits to the Somme battlefields in France. Such ventures give pupils a deep and personal understanding of this major historical event. Additionally, pupils are forging links with other faiths within the local area. For example, visits to a mosque are planned and the school's vocational studies department has an active link with a Buddhist temple in Bournemouth.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

3. The welfare, health and safety of the pupils



There is very good provision for pupils' welfare, health and safety and procedures are implemented consistently. Pupils are supervised closely at all times. This supervision is not over-bearing and allows pupils to go about their daily routine knowing they will have staff to turn to in the event of any problem. Staff have very good relationships with pupils. They are attentive to pupils' academic and emotional needs and because of this pupils thrive and grow in self-confidence.

The school has a full range of policies which contain detailed procedures to safeguard the health and welfare of pupils. A member of the senior management team has responsibility for oversight of these policies. He carries out this responsibility meticulously.

The behaviour management programme is firmly rooted in the principles of 'reality therapy'. This approach is sympathetically supported by reward of positive behaviours. Pupils willingly subscribe to this and fully understand how it works. Discussions with pupils indicate they think the system is generally fair and helps account for the very good behaviour seen in the school. Staff encourage pupils to reflect on any poor behaviour and inappropriate events are brought to a conclusion which

has regard for the dignity of the pupil.

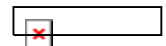
The school maintains an appropriate admission register. Although not required, the administrative staff also maintain a daily attendance register, but this lacks the use of more commonly accepted symbols to identify the difference between authorised and unauthorised absences. The senior manager responsible for health and safety matters has ensured that fire-safety inspections and procedures are carried out appropriately. Despite his best effort the school has been unable to arrange for the Fire Authority to confirm this satisfactory level of fire safety. Staff qualified in First Aid provide 24-hour cover and procedures for when pupils are on visits away from the school are defined rigorously. First Aid cabinets are available in all high risk areas of the school.

The school occupies a Grade 2 listed building and the governing body commissioned a report in order to comply with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 2002. As a result, a disability access plan is included within the school's development plan.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

4. The suitability of the proprietor and staff



The school is owned by the Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trust charity. An active governing body takes responsibility for the work of the school. There are appropriate procedures in place to obtain clearance from the Criminal Records Bureau prior to the appointment of all staff. The procedures which check the identity of staff are also secure but some personnel records do not contain evidence confirming staff's professional qualifications. The school has now put in place a procedure to rectify this omission.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

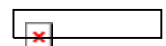
No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- ensure that, prior to the confirmation of the appointment of all staff, appropriate checks have been carried out to confirm their professional qualifications and that such information has been taken into account in determining whether their appointment will be confirmed (paragraph 4(c)).

5. The suitability of the premises and accommodation



The standard of the premises and accommodation is very good. The premises are well maintained and there is a high standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Classrooms provide an attractive environment for learning, which is enhanced by some very good displays of pupils' work and

achievements.

The main house contains offices, staffroom, medical room, library, kitchens and a dining hall. There are nine classrooms, several having a particular subject focus, such as English, history or mathematics. There are specialist rooms for science, ICT, music and a gymnasium. A distinctive feature is a school chapel which is used for assemblies. Residential accommodation is located on the first and second floors of the main building. The art department, DT suite, food technology room and vocational education centre are located in an adjoining building. Separate buildings also house a new gymnasium and swimming pool, geography room, a horticultural studies room and an outdoor education centre.

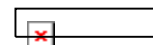
Classrooms provide good space for the numbers of pupils using them and the specialist rooms enable the school to teach the full range of National Curriculum subjects. The school is currently re-equipping the DT room and there are plans to extend facilities in the science room.

The extensive grounds provide very good provision for outdoor play, which includes a football field, hard surface with basketball nets, tennis courts and a cycle track.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

6. The quality of information for parents and other partners



The school has a good range of information which it can provide to parents and other partners. The procedures to disseminate this, however, are insecure. Parents are provided with a prospectus, but this does not provide the name and contact details of the chair of the governing body or the name of the headteacher. This initial information does not include the school's particulars on its arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions. It is, also, not made clear to parents they may request a range of other information, such as the qualifications of staff or the number of formal complaints in the previous school year. Despite these few omissions, parents are very satisfied that the school keeps them well informed about the progress of their child. Parents also receive an annual newsletter which celebrates the school's successes.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

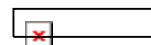
No.

What does the school need to do to comply with the regulations?

In order to comply with the Independent Schools Standards Regulations 2003 the school should:

- provide to parents the names and contact details of the chair of the governing body and the headteacher (paragraphs 6(2)(a) and 6(2)(c)); and
- provide particulars of the school's policy on and arrangements for admissions, discipline and exclusions (paragraph 6(2)(e)).
- addition the school should make clear to parents that they may request sight of the following information:;
- details of the number of complaints registered under the formal procedure during the preceding school year (paragraph 6(2)(j)); and
- the number of staff employed at the school, including temporary staff, and a summary of their qualifications (paragraph 6(2)(k)).

7. The effectiveness of the school's procedures for handling complaints



The school's complaints procedure sets out how parents can make informal and formal complaints. There is a timescale for handling complaints and a clear system for recording complaints in the appropriate manner.

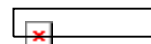
Parents are informed of the complaints procedure at the initial interview of their child and again on admission. The school handbook is given to the parents of all new pupils and states a copy of the full complaints policy is available on request.

In response to the parental questionnaire sent out prior to the inspection the large majority of parents report that they are familiar with the school's procedure for handling complaints.

Does the school meet the requirements for registration?

Yes.

School details



Name of school:	St Edward's School		
DfES ref number:	850/6032		
Type of school:	Special residential		
Status:	Independent		
Age range of pupils:	10 - 16 years		
Gender of pupils:	Boys		
Number on roll (full-time pupils):	Boys 48,	Girls 0,	Total 48
Number of boarders:	Boys 48,	Girls 0,	Total 48
Number of pupils with a statement of special educational need:	Boys 48,	Girls 0,	Total 48
Annual fees (boarders):	£57,849		
Address of school:	Melchet Court Sherfield English Romsey SO51 6ZR		
E-mail address:	lbartel@st-edwards.hants.sch.uk		
Telephone number:	01794 884271		
Fax number:	01794 884903		
Headteacher:	Mr L Bartel		
Proprietor:	Clifton Catholic Diocesan Trust		
Lead Inspector:	Mr Andrew Redpath		
Dates of inspection:	12 - 15 April 2005		

